Published by the City of Lafayette
Spring 1993
Vol. 3, No. 1

LAFAYETTE VISTAS

LAFAYETTE: A COMMUNITY FILLED WITH VOLUNTEERS

"By getting involved in a small way, you can make big things happen."
Volunteer Marjorie Dunbar

In this issue of Lafayette Vistas, we celebrate the active core of Lafayette citizens who voluntarily serve on our community's commissions and committees. This influential group, 150 strong, ranges in age from 13 to 72 and outnumbers the full-time city staff by nearly eight to one! Our volunteers serve myriad duties as disaster-preparedness planners, stand-by officers, financial consultants, reserve police officers, traffic experts and foundation members. Many major capital improvements, which otherwise would not have been possible, were seen through to completion by Lafayette volunteers. The community gazebo, Community Center landscaping, and the tot lot at the Community Center are just a few examples of volunteer-driven improvements. When something new appears in Lafayette or if something old gets a face lift, it's probably due to the hard work of our dedicated volunteer force.

Volunteers Make It Happen

Volunteer Marjorie Dunbar

Lafayette Resident: 21 years

Biggest Local Accomplishment: Reliez Valley Walkway. The walkway provides residents with a safe way to walk along this busy road. It also gives children a secure way to get to school as the footpath feeds directly into Springhill School. As chairperson of the walkways commission, Marjorie oversaw this project from start to finish. "At one point, I didn't think it was going to happen, but we eventually got final funding through a state grant and, combined with city funds and volunteer donations, it all worked out and we got our walkway. It was a perfect example of everyone working together."

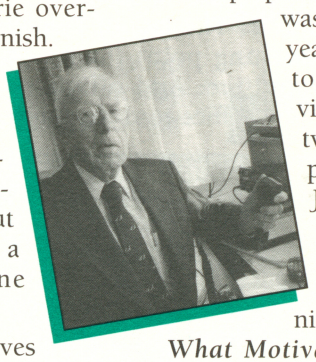
What Motivates Marjorie: "It gives me a lot of self satisfaction to make a difference in my community."

Words of Volunteering Wisdom: "If you are interested in making your community a better place to live, just start volunteering — one project at a time."

Volunteer Joe Gregory

Lafayette Resident: 32 years

Volunteer Duties: Although there have been no great disasters to require Joe Gregory's special skills, he's always ready. Joe is the local radio expert. He got involved in amateur radio 18 years ago when his son left for college. Amateur radio was a way for the two to communicate cross-country. Now Joe uses his radio skills to assist Lafayette during its disaster preparedness drills. When there was fire in Lafayette a few years back, Joe was called to the Red Cross to provide communications between the fire command post and the Red Cross. Joe also works with various organizations, such as The March of Dimes, to assist with communication during events.



What Motivates Joe: "It gives you a good feeling when you can help out."

Words of Volunteering Wisdom: "This city's administration is very receptive to volunteers and good about acknowledging the citizens. There's a sense of accomplishment when you volunteer."

Volunteer Chris Adams

Lafayette Resident: 44 years

Most Unusual Distinction: Lafayette Man of the Year 1967.

Local Contributions:

- Lafayette School Board 1954-67
- Launched Lafayette Youth Center
- Public Protection Committee
- Co-chair, Senior Services Commission
- Disaster Council

And much, much more...

Biggest Local Accomplishment: Senior Citizens Survey. Concerned about seniors living alone in Lafayette, the Senior Services Commission collected a list of Lafayette's elderly residents living in the downtown area. The commission worked with the seniors and mapped out a plan of action in cases of disaster and emergency. The seniors were provided with information on a variety of topics, from disaster preparedness to basic transportation.

What Motivates Chris: "I guess I'm just driven. I often ask myself, 'Why am I not retired?' But there's so many things that still need doing."

Words of Volunteering Wisdom: "Lafayette is my idea of the model volunteer city. If you want to make something happen in this community, you can get in there and do it."

WANTED: HARD WORKERS! NO PAY, GREAT BENEFITS!

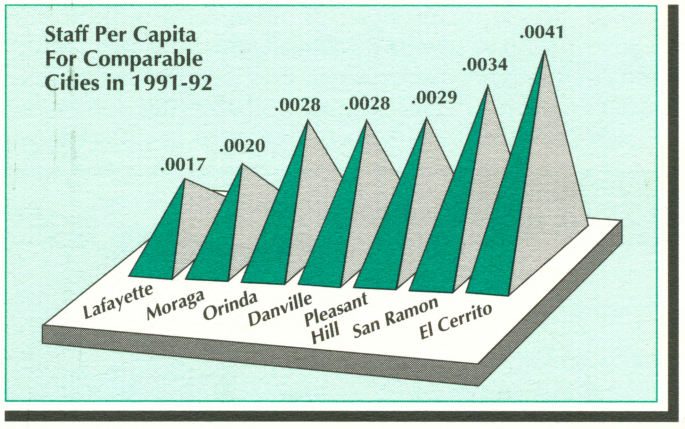
The City of Lafayette currently needs volunteers for the following committees and services. Please call the city offices for details, 284-1968.

- Members for new Engineering Committee (prof. civil engineers preferred)
- Crossing Guards • Police Reserves • Experienced Legislative Advocates
- Members for a new Public Safety Task Force

LAFAYETTE'S EFFICIENT LITTLE GOVERNMENT

and How We're Making It Even More Efficient

Last June, when the City of Lafayette was in the midst of the same budget crisis that enveloped virtually every other governmental agency in the state, the Lafayette City Council turned to its citizens for help. Insisting that a fresh look at the city's finances and operations was needed, the City Council proposed forming a finance committee made up of Lafayette residents with expertise in finance and program evaluation. The volunteer committee would review municipal operations and recommend strategies for making the city more efficient.



Four Lafayette residents, including Management Consultants Paul Jansen, Kevin Katari and Denis Hickey and Financial Planner Dennis Krentz were selected from the community to perform the pro-bono study for the city. After three months of weekly meetings, the Finance Committee presented a 100-page report to the City Council. The committee found that Lafayette, through its General Fund, spends less per capita than any of its six neighboring cities: Moraga, Orinda, Pleasant Hill, Danville, El Cerrito and San Ramon. The committee also noted that, with only 25 full-time employees, Lafayette has fewer staff per capita than those same six cities.

Efficient as we are, the Finance Committee was able to identify almost $400,000 worth of annual cost-saving measures, representing 10% of the city's General Fund, that could be implemented within two years. In all, the committee presented 43 recommendations for streamlining the city's operations.

A few of the committee's key money-saving recommendations include:

GENERAL FUND – Actively pursue all legislative and legal avenues to gain the city's full fair share of property taxes. Lafayette currently receives only about 20% of the property taxes that most cities collect.

POLICE – Aggressively pursue the creation of a public safety force. Fire and police personnel can be cross-trained to serve dual functions and to save money.

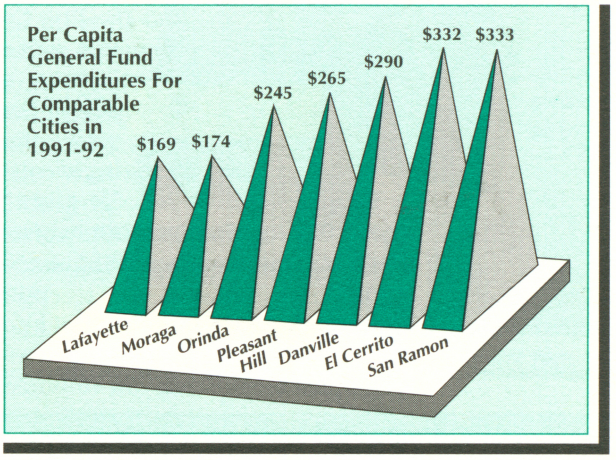
CITY OFFICES – Consider lower cost options for housing the city offices, including the purchase of a city office building.

CITY MANAGEMENT – Adopt an incentive pay system which rewards employees for promoting cost-saving methods and for providing more efficient service.

ASSET UTILIZATION – Convert vacant, city-owned properties into revenue-generating assets unless they are being held for a specific near-term purpose.

The committee's list of recommendations has been adopted by the City Council and will be periodically evaluated as the city staff moves the recommendations toward full implementation. To assist with this ongoing process, the Finance Committee will reconvene quarterly to audit the progress and report back to the council.

When the Finance Committee's findings were published, the City of Lafayette was surprised by the number of phone calls received from other cities throughout California. The findings so interested the city of Malibu that its Mayor Pro-Tem made a special visit to Lafayette to meet with city officials. The city of Petaluma is using the findings as a launching point for its own volunteer budget review committee. And officials in State Treasurer Kathleen Brown's office read the findings and noted that it is a good example of the current trend toward "reinventing government." Brown has requested permission to cite the Lafayette study in an upcoming report to the State Legislature on local government financing.



While not a panacea for all of the city's financial problems, the 43 recommendations in the report have established mechanisms and incentives for cost savings and better financial planning. One council member heralded the Finance Committee's work saying, "while your work was in a sense, 'free', it is of inestimable value to the city."

Understanding Your Government

Recent research sponsored by the League of California Cities, the association that represents all California municipalities, found that many residents throughout the state are confused about the functions of city government. Focus group participants from cities throughout the state had little or no idea who actually administered specific civic programs nor how they could get involved in their community.

As a result of these findings, through this issue of Lafayette Vistas, we hope to inform you about how your local government operates and how you can play an active role in the city's decision-making process.

Creative Funding Needed

Lafayette Community Center Strives to Break Even

The impact of last year's state budget cuts preoccupies every California city. Given the state's continuing financial crisis, each municipality is looking inward to find ways to trim its own budget. For Lafayette, the Community Center is one of many programs that has come under scrutiny.

The center is an integral part of the community, with over 16,000 people using the facility annually. Each year at the center, nearly 6,500 people take classes, 4,000 attend private functions and 6,000 participate in a variety of other activities.

Historically, the Community Center has received an annual subsidy from the city's General Fund of up to $100,000. But in order to maintain its current level of services, the Community Center has a two-year goal to become self-supporting and balance its budget. To meet this objective, several revenue-raising ideas are being considered: offer more profitable classes, charge a facility operation fee, raise rental rates and shift staff duties to include more fund-raising activities.

If you feel the Community Center is a valuable asset to Lafayette, check the following list to see how you can help. By participating in just one of these functions, residents can keep the doors of the Community Center open.

- Join the Lafayette Community Center Foundation. It's made up of a friendly group of residents who meet on the second Tuesday of each month and participate in two to four fundraisers per year.
- Make a tax deductible donation to the foundation.
- Volunteer your time to organize a grounds-keeping work party.
- Purchase an item from the Community Center Wish List.
- Make a payroll deduction through the United Way donor option plan.
- Buy advertising space in the Recreation Brochure.
- Follow the lead of the Lafayette Service League and hold a fund-raiser at the Community Center to benefit the Community Center.

If you have questions, suggestions or comments about the Community Center, please call the parks and recreation director at 284-2232 or write to the Lafayette Community Center, 500 Saint Mary's Road, Lafayette, CA 94549.

Milestones

"Milestones" will appear in each issue of ***Lafayette Vistas*** *to provide a schedule of upcoming city issues and an update on past city business.*

January — **STORM POLLUTION CLEAN UP** – The City Council approved the creation of a city-wide assessment program to fund clean-up of storm water run-off.

Jan/Feb — **WINTER STORM DAMAGES CITY** – Lafayette experienced over $500,000 in storm damage to public property. The City Council declared a local emergency and damaged areas were surveyed by federal and state officials. Thanks to the volunteers who were on sandbag duty during heavy rains.

February — **VAN POOL CHARGED UP** – Lafayette BART was selected by PG&E as a pilot program for an electrically-charged van. The van is used by PG&E car poolers and can be seen getting juiced up daily on the north side of the BART station.

March — **LAMORINDA TRAFFIC STUDY** – After 3 years of analysis, Lafayette, Moraga and Orinda have nearly settled on ways to ease congestion in the three-city region. Using up to $18 million in Measure C funds, school buses, left-turn pockets, strategically placed traffic signals and other improvements may soon be in place.

June 1 & 7 — **1993-94 MUNICIPAL BUDGET** – Here's your chance to provide input on how Lafayette spends its precious resources. 7:30 pm, Lafayette Community Center.

June 21 – July 30 — **SUMMER FUN FOR KIDS** – Lafayette's Parks & Recreation Department presents a wide variety of programs for children entering Kindergarten through 8th grade. The programs run from 9:00 am – Noon, with afternoon camp from Noon – 5:00 pm. To register, contact the Lafayette Community Center, 500 St. Mary's Road, 284-2232.

July 12 – Aug 6 — **FILING PERIOD TO RUN FOR CITY COUNCIL** If you're interested in running for the Lafayette City Council in November's election, call the City Clerk, 284-1968.

July 14 — **BASTILLE DAY PICNIC** – Bring your own picnic and celebrate Bastille Day with the Lafayette Langeac Society. Singing, dancing and storming the Bastille! Lafayette Reservoir, Main Picnic Area. For information, call Russ Johnson, 939-6341.

July 25 — **CONCOURS D' ELEGANCE** – Lafayette's biggest annual affair. Fundraiser for local charities and Chamber of Commerce. Inspect beautiful vintage autos and meet your City Council at a special "City of Lafayette" booth. It's your chance to bend their ears about how to improve our city. For information, call the Chamber of Commerce, 284-7404.

July 31 & Aug 1 — ***FREE*** **HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE DISPOSAL** – Drop off unwanted toxic household products such as leftover cleaning products, paints, solvents, pesticides, used motor oil, batteries, antifreeze, chemicals for pool, garden and hobby use, etc. Business waste not accepted. Appointments required. Call 1-800-750-4096.

Summer 93 — **DOWNTOWN PARKING METERS** – The City Council has approved plans to install parking meters in the downtown core area. Time zones and engineering work will commence in the spring, meters will be installed during the summer.

Local Government At A Glance

To help you find your way through the intimidating labyrinth of local government services, we've created the following chart. It provides an at-a-glance view of the different services in Lafayette and who is responsible for administering those services. We encourage you to keep this chart handy for times when you need help, but you're not sure where to turn.

KEY CITY SERVICES

The following services are administered by the City of Lafayette.

POLICE – Local police services are secured by the City of Lafayette through a contract with the County Sheriff's Department. 284-5010 (business), 911 (emergency)

PUBLIC WORKS – Maintains storm drains, streets, walkways, trails and city parks. 283-6271

PLANNING – Reviews land use and building developments. Interprets and enforces Lafayette's General Plan. 284-1976

RECREATION PROGRAMS/ COMMUNITY CENTER – Provides recreational, cultural and educational community programs. 284-2232

ENGINEERING – Oversees street, storm drain and park improvements. Reviews development projects and issues encroachment permits. 284-1951

ADMINISTRATION – Coordinates legislative activity. Provides general information. 284-1968

SERVICES BY OTHER AGENCIES

The following services are administered by a variety of external agencies.

BUILDING INSPECTION Contra Costa County, 646-2300

SEWERS Sanitation District, 933-0955

GARBAGE Sanitation District, 689-3890

FIRE Contra Costa County, 930-5500

LIBRARY Contra Costa County, 283-3872

HEALTH Contra Costa County, 370-5001

ANIMAL CONTROL Contra Costa County, 646-2995

WATER EBMUD, 820-6600

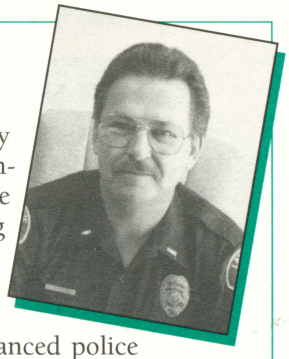
LAFAYETTE RESERVOIR EBMUD, 284-9669

BUS SYSTEM County Connection, 676-7500

DRUG & ALCOHOL PROGRAMS Contra Costa County, 313-6300

ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS/ HAZARDOUS MATERIALS Contra Costa County, 646-2286

Police Chief Selected



The top spot in our police force has been filled by Lieutenant Gregg Moore. As Police Services Manager, Moore is responsible for Lafayette's police patrol, investigations, youth services program and parking enforcement. Moore has made a four-year commitment to his new job. His predecessor, Lieutenant Mike Weymouth, left the position when his term expired last year. One of Chief Moore's primary desires is to provide enhanced police patrols in neighborhoods and near schools. Please join the City Council and staff in welcoming Chief Moore to our community.

City Directory

Officers

Scott Talan	**Mayor**
Anne Grodin	**Vice Mayor**
Ivor Samson	**Council Member**
Donald L. Tatzin	**Council Member**
Gayle B. Uilkema	**Council Member**

The City Council meets at 7:30 pm on the second and fourth Monday of the month at the Lafayette Community Center, 500 St. Mary's Road.

Staff

Robert F.D. Adams	**City Manager**
Steven Falk	**Assist. City Manager**
Sue Jusaitis	**City Clerk**
Mark Lander	**City Engineer**
Jennifer Russell	**Parks and Recreation Director**
Ed McNair	**Public Works Superintendent**
Gregg Moore	**Police Services Mgr.**
Niroop Srivatsa	**Planning Director**

City Offices and Police

Street Address:	**3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Suite 210**
Mailing Address:	**P.O. Box 1968 Lafayette, CA 94549-1968**

City Telephone Numbers

Administration:	**284-1968**
Engineering:	**284-1951**
Planning:	**284-1976**
Parks and Rec:	**284-2232**
Public Works:	**283-6271**
Senior Services:	**284-5050**
Police Business:	**284-5010**
Police Emergency:	**911**

LAFAYETTE VISTAS

is published for the residents of Lafayette and reports on issues, people and events that affect our city. As a member of this community, you are encouraged to contact us with your questions and comments. We request all correspondence be sent to:

Steven Falk, Editor, Lafayette Vistas
City of Lafayette
P.O. Box 1968
Lafayette, CA 94549-1968
510-284-1968 • FAX: 510-284-3169

LAFAYETTE

City of Lafayette
P.O. Box 1968
Lafayette, CA 94549-1968

Bulk Rate
U.S. Postage
PAID
Lafayette, CA
Permit No. 161

Postal Customer
Lafayette, CA 94549

Printed on Recycled Paper